

At a GENERAL ASSEMBLY held at

Burlington from the Twentieth Day of November to the Twenty-first Day of December 1771, in the Twelfth Year of the Reign of King George the Third, the following Laws were passed.

SESSION THE FOURTH.

C H A P. DXXXIX.

*An ACT to continue and amend an Act, entitled, An Act for better settling and regulating the Militia of this Colony of New-Jersey; for the repelling Invasions, and suppressing Insurrections and Rebellions.**

Passed Dec. 21, 1771.

WHEREAS the Act passed in the Nineteenth Year of the Reign of our late Sovereign Lord King George the Second, entitled, *An Act for better settling and regulating the Militia of this Colony of New-Jersey; for the repelling Invasions, and suppressing Insurrections and Rebellions*, will expire at the End of this Session of Assembly;

Sect. 1. BE IT ENACTED by the Governor, Council and General Assembly, and it is hereby Enacted by the Authority of the same, That the said Act, entitled, *An Act for better settling and regulating the Militia of this Colony of New-Jersey; for the repelling Invasions, and suppressing Insurrections and Rebellions*,* shall be, and hereby is continued, and every Article and Clause therein contained shall be and remain in full Force, from the Publication hereof, to the first Day of May which will be in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy-seven, and from thence to the End of the next Session of the General Assembly of this Colony, and no longer.

2. AND WHEREAS it has been a Custom of late, in some of the Counties of this Colony, to choose the Militia Officers Constables; for preventing the same for the Future, BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That, during the Continuance of this Act, it shall not be lawful for any Court of General Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, or for any of the Inhabitants of this Colony, at their annual Town-meetings, to appoint or choose any commissioned Officer, while in Commission, to be a Constable; any Law, Usage or Custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

C H A P. DXL.

Commissioned Officers not to be chosen Constables.

An ACT for the Preservation of Deer and other Game, and to prevent trespassing with Guns.

Passed Dec. 21, 1771.

WHEREAS the Laws heretofore passed in this Colony for the Preservation of Deer and other Game, and to prevent trespass-

* Chap. CC.

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ing with Guns, Traps and Dogs, have, by Experience, been found insufficient to answer the salutary Purposes thereby intended ; Therefore,

No Person to
carry a Gun
on Lands not
his own, ex-
cept, &c.

Penalty.

No Person to
drive Deer or
other Game,
except, &c.

Penalty.

Penalty on
Non-Resi-
dents.

Penalty for
killing, &c.
Deer out of
Season.

What shall
be Evidence
of such Kill-
ing, &c.

*Sect. 1. BE IT ENACTED by the Governor, Council and General Assembly of this Colony of New-Jersey, and it is hereby Enacted by the Authority of the same, That if any Person or Persons shall presume, at any Time after the Publication hereof, to carry any Gun on any Lands not his own, and for which the Owner pays Taxes, or is in his lawful Possession, unless he hath License or Permission in Writing from the Owner or Owners or legal Possessor, every such Person so offending, and convicted thereof, either upon the View of any Justice of the Peace within this Colony, or by the Oath or Affirmation of one or more Witnesses, before any Justice of the Peace of either of the Counties, Cities or Towns-corporate of this Colony, in which the Offender or Offenders may be taken or reside, he, she or they, shall, for every such Offence, forfeit and pay to the Owner of the Soil, or his Tenant in Possession, the Sum of *Forty Shillings*, with Costs of Suit ; which Forfeiture shall and may be sued for and recovered by the Owner of the Soil, or Tenant in Possession, before any Justice of the Peace in this Colony, for the Use of such Owner or Tenant in Possession.*

*2. AND BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person shall presume, at any Time after the Publication of this Act, to hunt or watch for Deer with a Gun, or set in any Dog or Dogs to drive Deer, or any other Game, on any Lands not his own, and for which the Owner or Possessor pays Taxes, or is in his lawful Possession, unless he hath License or Permission in Writing from such Owner or Owners or legal Possessor ; every such Person so offending, and being convicted thereof in Manner aforesaid, shall, for every such Offence, forfeit and pay to the Owner of the Soil, or Tenant in Possession, the Sum of *Forty Shillings*, with Costs of Suit ; provided, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to extend to prevent any Person carrying a Gun upon the King's Highway in this Colony.*

*3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if the Person or Persons offending against this Act be Non-Residents of this Colony, he or they shall forfeit and pay for every such Offence *Five Pounds*, and shall forfeit his or their Gun or Guns to any Person or Persons who shall inform and prosecute the same to Effect, before any Justice of the Peace in any County of this Colony, wherein the Offender or Offenders may be taken or apprehended.*

*4. AND BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons shall kill, destroy, hunt or take any Doe, Buck, Fawn, or any Sort of Deer whatsoever, at any other Time or Season, except only between the first Day of *September* and the first Day of *January* yearly and every Year, he, she or they so offending, shall forfeit and pay the Sum of *Forty Shillings* for each and every Offence ; to be sued for, recovered and applied as hereafter is directed.*

5. AND, for the better and more effectual convicting of Offenders against this Act, BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That any and every Person or Persons in whose Custody shall be found, or who shall

shall expose to Sale, any green Deerskins, or fresh Venison killed at any Time after the first Day of *January*, and before the first Day of *September* aforesaid, and shall be thereof convicted by the Oath or Affirmation of one or more credible Witnesses, shall be deemed guilty of offending against this Act, and be subjected to the Penalties of killing Deer out of Season.

6. AND WHEREAS great Numbers of idle and disorderly Persons make a Practice of hunting on the waste and unimproved Lands in this Colony, whereby their Families are neglected, and the Publick is prejudiced by the Loss of their Labour, BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That, from and after the first Day of *January* next, no Person or Persons whatsoever (except such Persons as are by the Laws of this Colony qualified to vote for Representatives in General Assembly, in Right of their Freeholds, and their Sons being of the Age of eighteen Years or upwards, and living with their Parent or Parents, or being Freeholders) shall, on any Pretence whatever, hunt on the waste and unimproved Lands in this Colony ; and if any Person or Persons, not qualified as aforesaid, shall presume to hunt as aforesaid, he or they so offending shall forfeit and pay, for every such Offence; the Sum of *Twenty Shillings* ; to be recovered by Action of Debt, with Costs, by any Person who shall sue for the same ; to be applied one Half to the Prosecutor, and the other Half to the Use of the Poor of the Township or Precinct where the Fact was committed.

Who may hunt on unimproved Lands.

Penalty on Offenders.

7. AND BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons within this Colony shall set any Trap or other Device whatsoever, larger than what is usually and commonly set for Foxes and Muskrats, such Person, setting such Trap or other Device, shall pay the Sum of *Five Pounds*, and forfeit the Trap or other Device, shall suffer three Months Imprisonment, and shall also be liable to make good all Damages any Person shall sustain by setting such Trap or other Device, and the Owner of such Trap or other Device, or Person to whom it was lent, shall be esteemed the Setter thereof, unless it shall be proved, on Oath or Affirmation, what other Person set the same, or that such Trap or other Device was lost by said Owner or Person to whom it was lent, and absolutely out of his Power ; and if the Setter of the Trap or other Device be a Slave, and it be his own voluntary Act, he shall (unless the Master or Mistress shall pay the Fine) in Lieu of such Fine, be publickly whipped with thirty Lashes, and committed till the Costs are paid ; and that the said Trap or other Device shall be broken and destroyed in the View and Presence of the Justice of the Peace before whom they are brought : And if any Person or Persons shall have Possession of, or there shall be found in his or their House, any Trap or Traps, Device or Devices whatsoever, for taking of Deer, such Person or Persons shall be subjected to the same Penalty as if he or they were convicted of setting such Trap or Traps, or other Device.

Penalty on a Slave setting such Trap, &c.

Penalty on keeping such Trap, &c.

8. AND, for encouraging the Destruction of such Traps and Devices, BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person shall seize any Trap or other Device for the taking Deer, and shall carry such Trap or other Device to any Magistrate of the County where such Trap or Device was seized, such Person shall be entitled to

Reward for seizing a Trap, &c.

an Order from the said Magistrate to the Collector of such County, to pay him the Sum of *Ten Shillings*, out of any Money in his Hands raised for the Use of the County; which Sums shall be allowed to such Collector on the Settlement of his Accounts.

Penalty on a
Smith making
or mending
such Trap,
&c.

9. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That every Smith or other Artificer, who shall hereafter make or mend any such Trap or other Device aforesaid, he shall forfeit and pay the Sum of *Forty Shillings*; and the Person carrying such Trap or other Device to the Artificer aforesaid, shall forfeit and pay the Sum of *Twenty Shillings*. And every Person who shall bring into this Colony any such Trap or Device as aforesaid shall forfeit and pay the Sum of *Forty Shillings*. And if the Person who shall carry the same to the Smith or Artificer shall be so poor as that he shall not be able to pay the Forfeiture aforesaid, he shall be committed to the common Gaol, until he shall prove who is Owner of such Trap or Device, or who delivered the same to him; and in such Case the Forfeiture aforesaid shall be levied on the Goods, or in Failure of Goods, on the Body of the Owner of such Trap or Device, or the Person who delivered the same to the Pauper, and the Trap or Device shall be forfeited and destroyed.

Penalty for
setting loaded
Guns.

10. AND WHEREAS a most dangerous Method of setting Guns has too much prevailed in this Province, BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons within this Colony shall presume to set any loaded Gun in such Manner as that the same shall be intended to go off or discharge itself, or be discharged by any String, Rope, or other Contrivance, such Person or Persons shall forfeit and pay the Sum of *Six Pounds*; and on Non-payment thereof shall be committed to the common Gaol of the County for six Months.

Application
of Penalties.

11. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That the Fines and Forfeitures in this Act expressed, and not particularly appropriated, shall be paid, one Half to the Prosecutor, and the other Half to and for the Use of the Poor of the Town, Precinct or District, where the Offence is committed; and that the Execution of this Act, and every Part thereof, shall be within the Cognizance and Jurisdiction of any one Magistrate or Justice of the Peace, without any Reference to the Act for Trial of small Causes in this Colony.

Jurisdiction
given to one
Magistrate.

This Act not
to affect
Parks.

12. AND BE IT ENACTED, That nothing in this Law shall be construed to extend to restrain the Owners of Parks, or of tame Deer, from killing, hunting or driving their own Deer.

Penalty on
Magistrate
neglecting
his Duty.

13. AND BE IT ALSO ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Justice of the Peace or other Magistrate, within this Province, shall have Information of any Persons offending against this Act, in killing Deer out of Season, setting and making Traps, Non-Residents killing Deer, and Persons setting of Guns, and shall not prosecute the same to Effect within two Months after such Information, he shall forfeit and pay the Sum or Sums to which the Offender against this Act would have been liable.

14. AND

14. AND BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That the Justices at every Quarter-Sessions of the Peace shall cause this Act to be publickly read; and give in Charge to the Grand-Jury to particularly inquire and present all Persons for killing Deer out of Season, setting or making Traps, and all Non-Residents killing, destroying, hunting and taking any Sort of Deer, and all Persons setting of Guns; and, upon Conviction for either of the said Offences, the said Justices shall set and impose the Fines and Penalties herein before-mentioned, with Costs of Suit.

This Act to be published and executed.

15. AND BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons whatsoever, whether the Accused or Accuser, Plaintiff or Defendant, shall think themselves aggrieved by any of the Judgments given by the said Justices or other Magistrates, for any Suit commenced by Virtue of this Act; then it shall and may be lawful for such Person or Persons to appeal, on giving sufficient Security for the Forfeitures and Costs, to the next Court of General Quarter-Sessions, held for such County where such Judgment shall be given; which Court is hereby empowered to hear and determine all and every such Appeal or Appeals.

Appeal given to next Sessions.

16. AND BE IT ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That if any Person or Persons, within this Colony, shall, after the Publication of this Act, watch with a Gun, on any uninclosed Land within two Hundred Yards of any Road or Path, in the Night Time, whether the said Road is laid out by Law or not, or shall stand or station him or themselves upon or within two Hundred Yards of any Road as aforesaid, for shooting at Deer driven by Dogs, he or they so offending, shall, on Conviction, forfeit and pay the Sum of *Five Pounds* for every such Offence; to be recovered by Action of Debt, or Presentment of the Grand-Jury as aforesaid, and pay all Damages.

Penalty for watching in the Night near a Road.

17. PROVIDED ALWAYS, That the sixth Section of this Act shall not be construed to affect any Native *Indian*; and that nothing in this Act shall be construed to prevent the Inhabitants of *Essex*, *Bergen*, *Morris* and *Suffex*, from making, having in their Houses, or setting Traps of five Pounds Weight or more for Bears, Wolves, Foxes, or any other wild Beasts, Deer only excepted.

Not to affect Indians, nor Essex, Bergen, Morris or Suffex.

18. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED by the Authority aforesaid, That all former Laws made in this Colony for the Preservation of Deer and other Game, and to prevent trespassing with Guns, and regulating the Size of Traps, shall be, and they are hereby repealed.

Repeal of Former Laws.

C H A P. DXLI.

An ACT declaring the River Delaware a common Highway, and for improving the Navigation in the said River.

Passed Dec. 21, 1771.

WHEREAS the improving the Navigation in Rivers is of great Importance to Trade and Commerce; AND WHEREAS the River *Delaware*